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6.10 AGRICULTURE AND SOILS

This section discusses the soils and agricultural resources for the Project.

6.10.1 Affected Environment

6.10.1.1 Introduction

The Project is located approximately 5 miles east of the Salton Sea. This region of the Imperial Valley includes undeveloped land and agriculture land use. The area lies near the southeastern margin of ancient Lake Cahuilla and southwest of the Chocolate Mountains. This section discusses the affected soil and agricultural resources for the Project (see Figure 6.10-1, Soils in Vicinity).

The affected environments for soil and agriculture resources are described in this section. Potential impacts are discussed in Section 6.10.2, cumulative impacts are discussed in Section 6.10.3, and applicant-committed mitigation measures are presented in Section 6.10.4.

6.10.1.2 Regional Setting

Imperial County is a rural agricultural county in the southern portion of the Imperial Valley. The region has a long growing season and low precipitation (average 2.93 inches per year). Precipitation occurs primarily from mid-fall to mid-spring. Summers are long and hot; winters are typically mild. Imperial County is a leading agricultural area because of both environmental and cultural factors including good soils, a year-round growing season, the availability of adequate water transported from the Colorado River by a complex canal system, extensive areas committed to agricultural production, a gently sloping topography, and a climate that is well-suited for growing crops and raising livestock (Imperial County General Plan, Agricultural Element 1993).

Approximately 20 percent of Imperial County is irrigated for agricultural purposes, with most of the irrigated agricultural land (512,163 acres) within the Imperial Valley. Irrigation water was first delivered to the Imperial Valley in June 1901 by the California Development Corporation by diverting it from the Colorado River through a channel cut in Mexico to the Alamo River. In 1905 the Colorado River flooded and ran uncontrolled through the Imperial Valley, inundating 488 square miles of farmland and creating the Salton Sea. The water delivery system was improved over the next several decades including the completion of the All American Canal, which replaced the Alamo Canal, in 1941. The IID has operated the water system since 1911. Irrigation agriculture in Imperial Valley is extremely diverse and includes many types of vegetable crops including lettuce, carrots, onions, tomatoes, cauliflower, and broccoli; alfalfa, Sudan grass, and other animal feed; sugar beets; wheat and other grains; melons; cotton; and various citrus, fruits, and nuts (Imperial County General Plan, Agricultural Element 1993).

The IID water service area is generally level, with low levels of natural erosion. Erosion is dependent on texture (i.e., clay, sand, or silt content), moisture content, and agronomic practices (i.e., cropped, fresh-tilled, or fallow). Lacustrine basin soils in IID water service area formed on nearly level old lakebeds near prehistoric Lake Cahuilla. These soils generally consist of silty clays, silty clay loams, and clay loams; are deep and highly calcareous; and usually contain

gypsum and soluble salts. The central areas in IID water service area generally have fine-textured silts, which are primarily used for crops. Soils within Imperial County have no potential for farming, unless irrigated, because of the dry climate. Continued agricultural use of soils within IID water service area requires both irrigation and installation of subsurface tile drains to carry away water and salts that would have otherwise built up in the soils and prevented crop growth. Tile drains discharge irrigation water to surface drains.

6.10.1.3 Affected Soils Resource

Soil types near the Project are described and mapped at the level of “mapping units,” which are defined to the approximate level of detail appropriate for soil management decision-making. The location of, and properties of, the soil-mapping units are based on interpretation of the State Soil Geographic Data Base (STATSGO) prepared by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS 1995). Based on this mapping and the current layout of the Project, only one soil-mapping unit will be affected by the construction of the Project. The mapped unit in this area is the Niland Gravelly Sand, Wet.

The Niland Gravelly Sand in the Project Site is formed primarily on distal alluvial fan deposits that overlie lake deposits. The fan deposits generally support the formation of very deep soils, with moderate permeabilities, slow runoff, and low shrink-swell potential. Because the granular near-surface materials overlie clayey materials at a depth of 1 to 2 feet, there is a potential for a perched water table at depths of 12 to 24 inches if the soils are irrigated. No significant irrigation currently takes place in the general site area. The nearest irrigated areas are located north of the Project area by approximately 2,000 feet.

The following paragraphs provide a brief description of the mapped soil unit.

Niland Gravelly Sand, Wet

This nearly level, very deep soil forms on the edges of floodplains and basin floors within the Project area. The representative soil profile is greater than 60 inches. The soil’s surface texture is gravelly sand and the soil is moderately well drained. The soil has a moderate susceptibility to water erosion and high susceptibility to wind erosion. This soil has a seasonal high water table if irrigated. The permeability is slow and the shrink-swell potential is low.

6.10.1.4 Agricultural and Prime Farmland

Agriculture

The Project Site is largely undeveloped land. There are two major agricultural distribution canals to the northeast of the Project that supply water to the Imperial Valley. The East Highline Canal is located approximately 4,000 feet from the existing Niland Substation. The Coachella Canal is located approximately 2 miles from the existing Niland Substation. No crops have been grown at the Project Site. The nearest agricultural usage is on the parcels north and northwest of the site. More extensive agricultural land use begins south of Niland. None of the Project components traverse land covered by Williamson Act contracts.

Prime Farmland

Important farmland areas were assessed using the California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program's Soil Candidate Listing for Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance for Imperial County. Approximately 196,927 acres of prime farmland and 313,218 acres of farmland of statewide importance were surveyed in Imperial County in 2004 (California Department of Conservation, 2004). The Project facility, adjacent construction parking and laydown areas, and associated pipelines are not located within any areas designated as prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance based on review of available information.

6.10.2 Environmental Consequences

The environmental consequences of the Project, with respect to soil and agricultural resources, are mainly related to construction and operation of the Project. Environmental consequences related to soils are presented in Section 6.10.2.1, and environmental consequences related to agricultural resources are presented in Section 6.10.2.2.

6.10.2.1 Soils Resource

Appendix G of the CEQA identifies the following criteria for determining significance of impacts to soils resources:

- Project results in substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil, degradation of soils or farmland, changes in topography, or unstable soil conditions.
- Project is in an unstable soil or soil that would become unstable because of the Project, and potentially result in landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.
- Project is on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1 of the UBC (International Conference of Building Officials 1994), creating substantial risk to life or property.
- Project would place septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems on soils incapable of adequately supporting these systems where sewers are unavailable for the disposal of wastewater.

The assessment of Project impacts to the soil resource is based on soils information presented in the published and unpublished Soil Conservation Service (SCS) soil survey information covering the Project area (SCS 1981, NRCS 1995) and consideration of the applicant-committed mitigation measures. The Project area soil conditions include slightly sloping topography and undeveloped site conditions. The use of erosion control best management practices (BMPs) to control water and wind erosion during construction activities, and placement of impervious surfaces and/or BMPs on disturbed areas within the Project area will effectively control soil loss after construction. Consequently, quantitative calculations of potential soil loss using the Universal Soil Loss and Chapin Wind Erosion Equations, which are typically used to quantify water and wind-induced soil loss for agricultural operations were not considered appropriate. Potential impacts of the Project on the soil resources can be divided into those involving construction activities and those related to plant operation.

*Project Site***Construction-Related Impacts**

Construction-related impacts to the soil resources associated with development of the Project, including the proposed water and natural gas laterals, primarily involve vegetation removal, excavation, grading, and temporary stockpiling. A total of approximately 26 acres of land will be disturbed during construction activities, with the completed Project improvements limited to approximately 22 acres. The proposed improvements include excavation for one unlined stormwater retention basin for onsite flow (1.5 acres, 295,000 CF), and two stormwater detention basins for offsite flow (total 0.8 acres, 105,000 CF). These three basins cover approximately 2.3 acres with a total volume of approximately 395,000 CF. Grading will be performed in the areas planned for building pads, utilities, berms, and for drainage of surface water flow.

The existing site topography slopes gently to the southwest. Some very minor cut and fill will be required to provide a level area for the facilities. The surficial soils will likely be excavated and recompacted within the areas of proposed facilities. Construction will include approximately 1,800 feet of natural gas pipeline and 700 feet of water line.

Impacts during construction of the proposed plant site on soil resources can include alteration of the existing soil profile, increased soil erosion, and soil compaction. Alteration of the existing soil profiles, including mixing of soils and rock, will alter the physical, chemical, and biological characteristics of the native soils and underlying geology. Clearing of the protective vegetative cover and subsequent soil disturbance will likely result in short-term increases in water and wind erosion rates. Soil erosion causes the loss of topsoil and can increase the sediment load in surface-receiving waters downstream of the construction site. Soil action can decrease infiltration rates, resulting in increased runoff and erosion rates. The magnitude, extent, and duration of construction-related impacts depend on the erodibility of the soil, the proximity of the construction activity to receiving water, and the construction methodologies, duration, and season. The gentle topography and site grading in the project area would limit soil erosion to minor or moderate. The mitigation measures outlined in Section 6.10.4, Mitigation Measures, would further reduce impacts to soil resources resulting from construction of the Project to less than significant levels.

Operation-Related Impacts

The Project will include the facility buildings, asphalt, and/or crushed aggregate. The perimeter drainage berm and stormwater retention basins are intended to manage stormwater at the site. Therefore, no impacts to soil resources are anticipated from operations at the Project Site.

6.10.2.2 Agriculture and Prime Farmland

Appendix G of CEQA identifies the following criteria for determining significance of impacts to agriculture and prime farmland:

- Does the project convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to nonagricultural uses?
- Does the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract?

- Does the project involve other changes in the existing environment that, because of their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to nonagricultural use?

The Project does not convert prime farmland, unique farmland or farmland of statewide importance and does not conflict with a Williamson Act contract. Furthermore, the Project is consistent with land-use zoning, and does not represent a loss of farmland. Therefore, development of the Project does not represent a significant impact to agricultural resources.

Potential Impacts of Power Plant Emissions

Operation of the Project facility will expose soils and vegetation near the plant facility to slightly increased levels of air pollutants, as discussed in Section 6.1, Air Quality. As presented, these emissions would not adversely impact plant habitats. Based on the type of emissions, the paucity of surrounding vegetation, and the implementation of the emission control devices, impacts to the soil vegetation system from the Project emissions are expected to be insignificant.

6.10.3 Cumulative Impacts

From a soils or agricultural lands resources perspective, no cumulative impacts have been identified for the Project.

6.10.4 Mitigation Measures

The development of the Project is consistent with existing zoning and is compatible with agricultural land uses. No significant agricultural impacts were identified; therefore, no agricultural mitigation measures are proposed.

This section describes applicant-committed mitigation measures that will be implemented to reduce Project-related potential impacts to the soil resource.

The following mitigation measures will be implemented to reduce potentially significant soils impacts to insignificant levels. An acceptable level of soil erosion, as used herein, is defined as that amount of soil loss that would not affect (i.e., limit) the potential long-term beneficial uses of the soil as a growth medium, or adversely affect water resources because of accelerated erosion and subsequent sedimentation. Refer to Section 6.13, Water Resources, for mitigation measures related to potential impacts to water quality associated with soil erosion.

- **Soil-1:** Conduct grading operations consistent with the Imperial County Grading Ordinance.
- **Soil-2:** Prepare and implement a detailed Erosion Control Plan prior to construction, which may be a component of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) (see Mitigation Measure Water-4).
- **Soil-3:** Limit soil erosion/dust generation by wetting active construction areas (including roads) with water or by applying dust palliatives (soil binders).
- **Soil-4:** Stabilize disturbed areas that will not be covered with structures (e.g., buildings) or pavement following grading and/or cut-and-fill operations. Linear utility routes will be allowed to naturally revegetate.
- **Soil-5:** Clear vegetation only to the extent necessary during construction activities.

- **Soil-6:** Segregate and stockpile removed topsoil for reuse if practicable.
- **Soil-7:** Implement drainage control measures and grade plant site to direct surface water into the retention basins.
- **Soil-8:** Conduct post-construction monitoring of areas that were disturbed during the construction phase.

With implementation of the mitigation measures listed above, no significant unavoidable adverse impacts to the soils resources are anticipated because of construction and operation of the Project.

6.10.5 Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, and Standards

The following LORS are applicable to protection of soils resources. Applicable LORS are summarized in Table 6.10-1, Summary of LORS. Agency contacts are provided in Table 6.10-2, Agency Contact List for Laws, Ordinances, Regulations, and Standards. Required permits are summarized in Table 6.10-3, Required Permits.

**TABLE 6.10-1
SUMMARY OF LORS**

Jurisdiction	LORS	Requirements	Conformance Section	Administering Agency	Agency Contact
AGRICULTURE AND SOILS					
Federal					
	Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972; Clean Water Act of 1977 (including 1987 amendments).	Meet discharge requirements relative to sediment because of accelerated erosion.	Section 6.10.5.1, Federal Authorities and Administering Agencies	RWQCB; Colorado River Basin Region 7, under the direction of the State Water Resources Control Board	4, 5
	U.S. Department of Agriculture, SCS, National Engineering Handbook (1983), Sections 2 and 3.	Implement standards for the planning, design, and conservation of soil conservation practices.	Section 6.10.5.1, Federal Authorities and Administering Agencies	USDA NRCS.	1
State					
	California Public Resource Code § 25523(a)	Provisions relating to the manner in which the proposed facility is to be designed, sited, and operated to protect environmental quality and assure public health and safety.	Section 6.10.5.2, State Authorities and Administering Agencies	CEC	2

**TABLE 6.10-1
SUMMARY OF LORS**

Jurisdiction	LORS	Requirements	Conformance Section	Administering Agency	Agency Contact
AGRICULTURE AND SOILS					
	California Public Resource Code §21000 <i>et. seq.</i> ; Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA, Appendix G	Environmental checklist form, evaluation of erosion or siltation and conversion of agricultural lands.	Section 6.10.5.2, State Authorities and Administering Agencies	CEC	2
	Williamson Act	Provides for lowered property taxes for lands maintained in agricultural and certain open space uses.	Section 6.10.5.2, State Authorities and Administering Agencies	Department of Conservation, Office of Land Conservation	3
	California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act; Cal. Water Code, Division 7, § 13260–13269	Adequate protection of water quality by appropriate design, sizing and construction of erosion and sediment controls; obtain waste discharge requirements concerning potential surface water pollution from project area runoff.	Section 6.10.5.2, State Authorities and Administering Agencies	CEC, RWQCB Colorado River Basin Region 7	2, 4
Local					
Imperial County Codified Ordinance Site Design Standards					
	Imperial County Land Use Code, Title 9, Division 3, Chapter 1, Sections 90301.02; 90301.03; Chapter 2, Section 90302.13	Regulations pertaining to fugitive dust control during grading. Regulations describing submittal requirements related to grading projects; description of soil test required for grading permit.	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6
Imperial County Codified Ordinance Grading Regulations					
	Imperial County Land Use Code, Title 9, Division 10, Chapter 10	Regulations pertaining to construction permits.	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6

**TABLE 6.10-1
SUMMARY OF LORS**

Jurisdiction	LORS	Requirements	Conformance Section	Administering Agency	Agency Contact
AGRICULTURE AND SOILS					
Imperial County Codified Ordinance Flood Damage Regulations					
	Imperial County Land Use Code, Title 9, Division 16, Chapter 3, Section 91603.00; Chapter 4, Section 91604.00; Chapter 5, Section 91605.04.	Permit required for development within the floodplain	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6
Imperial County General Plan, Open Space and Conservation Element					
	Policy	Landscaping should be required in all developments to prevent erosion on graded sites, and, if the area is contiguous with undisturbed wildlife habitat, the plan should include revegetation with native plant species.	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6
	Goal 1	Environmental resources shall be conserved for future generations by minimizing environmental impacts in all land use decisions.	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6
	Goal 4; Objective 4.2	The county will actively conserve and maintain contiguous farmlands and prime soil areas to maintain economic vitality and the unique lifestyle of the Imperial Valley. Control and prevent soil erosion when possible.	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6
	Goal 8	The county will conserve, protect, and enhance the water resources in the planning area.	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6

**TABLE 6.10-1
SUMMARY OF LORS**

Jurisdiction	LORS	Requirements	Conformance Section	Administering Agency	Agency Contact
AGRICULTURE AND SOILS					
Imperial County General Plan, Agricultural Element					
	Goal 1	Preservation of important farmland.	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6
	Goal 3	Limit the introduction of conflicting uses into farming areas, including residential development of existing parcels, which may create the potential for conflict with continued agricultural use of adjacent property.	Section 6.10.5.3, Local Authorities and Administering Agencies	Imperial County Planning/Building Department	6

**TABLE 6.10-2
AGENCY CONTACT LIST FOR LORS**

FEDERAL

1 U.S. Department of
Agriculture, Natural
Resources Conservation
Services
Raul Ramirez
1601 New Stine Rd.
Suite 290
Bakersfield, CA 93309
(661) 861-4129 (ext 3)

STATE

2 California Energy
Commission
Mr. Paul Richins
1516 9th Ave.
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 654-4074

3 California Department of
Conservation
Dennis O'Bryant, Acting
Assistant Director
Division of Land Resource
Protection
801 K Street
M.S. 24-01
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 324-0850

4 Water Quality Control Board,
Colorado River Basin Region
7
BASIN PLANNING
Supervisor - Joan Stormo
573-720 Fred Waring Drive,
Suite 100
Palm Desert, CA 92260
(760) 346-7491

**TABLE 6.10-2
AGENCY CONTACT LIST FOR LORS**

5	California Department of Water Resources 1001 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814 Connie Anderson (916) 341-5800
LOCAL	
6	Imperial County Planning/Building Department 939 Main Street El Centro, CA Jurg Heuberger (760) 482-4236

**Table 6.10-3
REQUIRED PERMITS**

Issuing Agency	Type of Permit Required	Schedule
RWQCB-Colorado River Basin Region 7	Notice of Intent (NOI)	Prior to construction
	NPDES General Construction Storm Water Permit	Prior to construction
	Grading Permit, Construction Permit	Prior to construction
Imperial County	Development Permit Requirements to be met	Prior to construction
	Septic Tank/Leach Field Permit	Prior to construction

6.10.5.1 Federal Authorities and Administering Agencies

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972; Clean Water Act of 1977 (including its 1987 amendments). These authorities establish requirements for any facility or activity that has or that will discharge wastes (including sediment because of accelerated erosion) that may interfere with the beneficial uses of receiving waters.

The administering agency for the above authority is the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Colorado River Basin, Region 7, under the direction of the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

A SWPPP would be submitted to the RWQCB to be reviewed and approved. The SWPPP would incorporate all appropriate erosion control measures during construction of the Project.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, *National Engineering Handbook* (1983), Sections 2 and 3. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prescribes standards of technical excellence for the SCS (now the National Resources Conservation Service [NRCS]) for the planning, design, and construction of soil conservation practices.

The administering agency for the above authority is the NRCS.

The applicant would adhere to the appropriate standards associated with the planning, design, and construction of soil conservation practices.

6.10.5.2 State Authorities and Administering Agencies

California Public Resources Code §25523(a); CCR §§1752, 1752.5, 2300-2309, and Chapter 2, Subchapter 5, Article 1, Appendix B, Part (i). The code provides for protection of environmental quality. Regarding the Project, the code requires submission of information to the CEC concerning potential environmental impacts, and the CEC's decision on the AFC must include consideration of environmental protection.

The administering agency for the above authority is the CEC.

California Environmental Quality Act, California Public Resources Code §21000 *et. seq.*; Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970, 14 CCR §15000 - 15387, Appendix G. The CEQA guidelines specify that: "A project will normally have a significant effect on the environment if it will ...[(q)] (q) Cause substantial flooding, erosion or siltation; ...[(y)] (y) Convert prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use or impair the agricultural productivity of prime agricultural lands."

The administering agency for the above authority is the CEC.

The Project would comply with these CEQA requirements because BMPs would be implemented to mitigate significant erosion, siltation, or flooding effects. The Project Site would not require the conversion of prime agricultural land to non-agricultural use; the Land Evaluation and Site Assessment (LESA) model does not indicate a significant impact; the Project does not represent a significant net loss of farmland; none of the Project components traverse land covered by Williams Act Contracts.

California Land Conservation Act (Williamson Act). Cal. Government Code Title 5, Part 1, Chapter 7 Section §§51200-51295. The Williamson Act provides for lowered property taxes for lands maintained in agricultural and certain open-space uses. The landowner enters into a contract with the county or city to restrict land uses to those compatible with agriculture, wildlife habitat, scenic corridors, recreational use, or open space. In return, the local authorities calculate the property tax assessment based on the actual use of the land instead of its potential value assuming full commercial development. To be eligible, the land must be designated by a city or county as agricultural preserve, scenic highway corridor, or wildlife habitat area; or it must be actively used for the three years immediately preceding the beginning of the contract as a salt pond, managed wetland, recreational or open-space area.

The administering agency for the above authority is the Department of Conservation, Office of Land Conservation.

The Project is not expected to require the cancellation of any Williamson Act contracts.

The California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act of 1972; California Water Code, §13260 - 13269; 23 CCR Chapter 9. The code requires adequate protection of water quality by appropriate design, sizing, and construction of erosion and sediment controls. Discharge of waste earthen material into surface waters resulting from land disturbance may require the filing of a report of waste discharge (Water Code §13260[a]), and provides for the issuance of waste discharge requirements regarding the discharge of any waste that can affect the quality of the waters of the state. Regarding potential surface water pollution from Project area runoff, the waste discharge requirements may incorporate requirements based on the following sources of recommended methods and procedures:

- State Water Resources Control Board. 1996. *Erosion and Sediment Control Field Manual*.
- USEPA. 1973. *Processes, Procedures and Methods to Control Pollution Resulting From All Construction Activity*. Presents information on processes, procedures, and methods for controlling sediment, stormwater, and pollutants from construction activities.
- California Department of Resources Conservation. 1978. *Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook*. Provides procedures by which physical and climatic data and erosion control practices can be considered in making an assessment of a site for determining the need for an erosion control plan and for preparing an erosion control plan.

The administering agencies for the above authority are the CEC and the RWQCB (Colorado Basin, Region 7).

The Project would develop an Erosion Control Plan to address surface water runoff.

6.10.5.3 Local Authorities and Administering Agencies

Imperial County Land Use Code, Title 9, Division 3, Chapter 1, Sections 90301.02, 90301.03; Chapter 2, Section 90302.13

This county ordinance establishes development standards. The ordinance requires that dust control measures be implemented during construction and grading activities. It requires submittal of a Plot Plan to the Imperial County Planning/Building Department for approval before obtaining a grading permit. The Plot Plan must include a map showing graded topography. Upon approval of the Plot Plan, a Grading Plan must be submitted that includes a topographic map showing sloped areas. This ordinance also establishes that a Soils Report may be required, which includes soil infiltration, soil texture test, cation exchange capacity, and a soil fertility test.

The administering agency is the Imperial County Planning/Building Department.

The Project would comply with the grading plan requirements through the CEC review process. The grading and drainage plans for the Project would incorporate BMPs and appropriate grading techniques to control fugitive dust emissions and minimize erosion. A soils report would be prepared, if necessary, which would present the results of required soil tests.

See Imperial County Land Use Code, Title 9, Division 10, Chapter 10.

Imperial County's grading ordinance incorporates regulations pertaining to excavation, grading, and construction. This section of the ordinance also identifies procedures and requirements for applying for a construction permit.

No person, firm, association, corporation or organization except public entities and their officers, employees or contractors who are performing work within publicly owned ROWs, shall, within the unincorporated territories of the County of Imperial, do any grading, excavation or earthwork construction without having first obtained a permit therefore from the County Engineer.

Application for a permit must include drainage systems, protective devices, and existing and proposed elevations. Permit conditions establish that (1) proposed grading, excavation, or earthwork will not cause said land to be unfit of agricultural use; (2) the depth of grading, excavation, or earthwork will not preclude the use of drain tile in irrigated lands; and (3) the

grading, excavation, or earthwork construction cannot extend below the water table of the immediate area.

The administering agency is the Imperial County Planning/Building Department.

The applicant would comply with the ordinance requirements through the CEC review process. The grading and drainage plans for the Project would incorporate BMPs and appropriate grading techniques that would minimize the amount of cut and fill. Grading plans would implement erosion control measures for construction and a permanent stormwater drainage plan. A registered engineer would prepare the grading and drainage plans.

6.10.5.4 Imperial County General Plan

Open Space and Conservation Element

Conservation of Environmental Resources for Future Generations

Goal 1: Environmental resources shall be conserved for future generations by minimizing environmental impacts in all land use decisions.

The administering agency for the above authority is the Imperial County Planning/Building Department.

The Project incorporates engineered grading and drainage plans (see Figure 2.2-6, Site Grading and Drainage Plan) to minimize grading and assure appropriate drainage of the Project. Additionally, mitigation measures including sediment and erosion control during grading and construction activities would be implemented to minimize environmental impacts related to erosion and sediment transport. Graded areas would be revegetated as needed to minimize erosion. The Project, as proposed, complies with the objectives of this goal.

Preservation of Water Resources

Goal 8: The county will conserve, protect, and enhance the water resources in the planning area.

The administering agency for the above authority is the Imperial County Planning/Building Department.

The Project incorporates engineered grading and drainage plans to minimize grading and assure appropriate drainage of the facility. Additionally, mitigation measures including sediment and erosion control during grading and construction activities would be implemented to minimize environmental impacts related to erosion and sediment transport. The Project, as proposed, complies with the objectives of this goal.

Biological Resource Conservation Preservation

Policy 2 – Landscaping should be required in all developments to prevent erosion on graded sites, and if the area is contiguous with undisturbed wildlife habitat, the plan should include revegetation with native plant species.

The administering agency for the above authority is the Imperial County Planning/Building Department.

The Project incorporates engineered grading and drainage plans to minimize grading and assure appropriate drainage of the facility.

6.10.6 References

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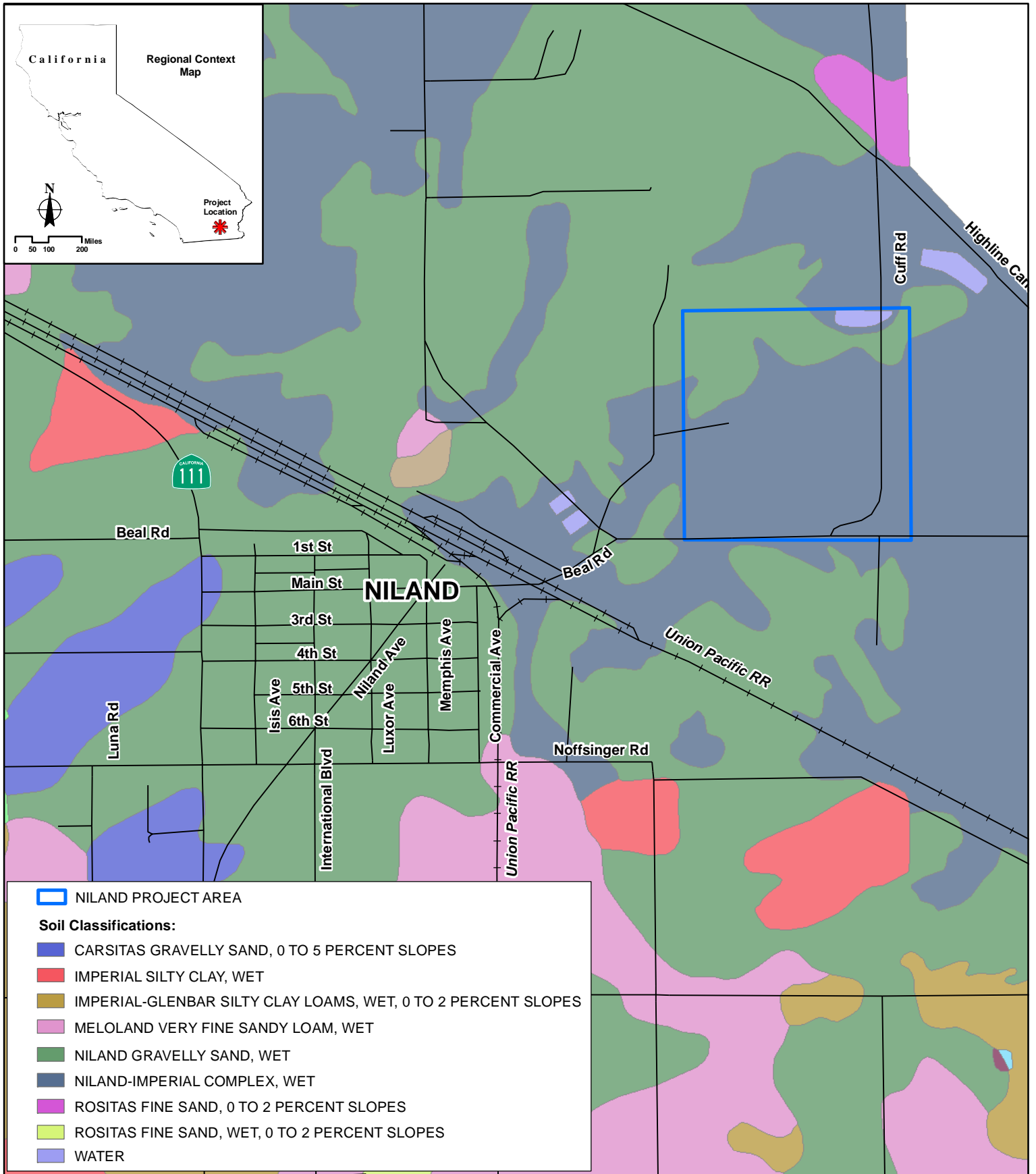
_____. 1993. Imperial County General Plan. Water Element. November.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service (SCS). 1981. Soil Survey of Imperial County California, Imperial Valley Area.



Soils in Vicinity

Niland Gas Turbine Plant
Imperial Irrigation District

URS

FIGURE 6.10-1

0 375 750 1,500 Feet



SOURCES:
TIGER (base data); U.S. Department of Agriculture:
STATSGO (soils)

